



# NORTHEAST IDAHO

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON, & TETON COUNTIES

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

September's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Bonneville Labor Market Area (LMA) increased four-tenths of a percentage point over the month to 3.6 percent as seen in Northeast Table 1. Although the *Civilian Labor Force* increased by 720, the total number of unemployed individuals increased by 330, thus driving the rate up. Bonneville County was the only county out of the four in the LMA that experienced a decrease in the unemployment rate over the month. The largest increase was seen in Bingham County where layoffs for maintenance were strong in the processing and fresh-pack warehouses. Year-over-year, the Bonneville LMA unemployment rate increased three-tenths of a percentage point with both Bingham and Jefferson Counties each showing increases of seven-tenths of a percentage point. Bonneville County remained unchanged and Butte County decreased 1.9 percentage points. Idaho Falls, the largest city in the LMA, experienced a rate decrease of one-tenth of a percentage point month-over-month and year-over-year to its current 3.1 percent. The LMA's unemployment rate was 1.4 percentage points lower than the state's rate of 5.0 percent and 1.8 percentage points lower than the national rate of 5.4 percent.

Of the other six counties in Northeast Idaho, Lemhi County had the highest unemployment rate at 7.4 percent while Madison County had the lowest rate at 1.2 percent. These counties were in the middle of grain and hay harvest and preparing for potato harvest at this time, accounting for most decreases in unemployment rates over the month. Only Clark, Lemhi and Teton Counties showed slight increases in their rates. Year-over-year, Fremont and Madison Counties showed slight increases, but Lemhi County showed an increase of 1.2 percentage points. The *Civilian Labor Force* in Lemhi County increased by almost 100 people, while the total number

Northeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Bonneville, Bingham, Butte, and Jefferson Counties

	Sep 2004*	Aug 2004	Sep 2003	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	88,560	87,840	80,910	0.8	9.5
Unemployment	3,160	2,830	2,690	11.7	17.5
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.6	3.2	3.3		
Total Employment	85,400	85,010	78,220	0.5	9.2
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	89,870	90,110	82,270	-0.3	9.2
Unemployment	3,130	3,490	2,730	-10.3	14.7
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.5	3.9	3.3		
Total Employment	86,740	86,630	79,540	0.1	9.1
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS</b>	68,740	68,400	66,550	0.5	3.3
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	11,140	11,270	10,670	-1.2	4.4
Natural Resources & Mining	70	70	70	0.0	0.0
Construction	6,170	6,320	5,630	-2.4	9.6
Manufacturing	4,900	4,880	4,970	0.4	-1.4
Food Manufacturing	2,660	2,680	2,660	-0.7	0.0
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	300	310	290	-3.2	3.4
Machinery Manufacturing	430	420	440	2.4	-2.3
Other Manufacturing	1,510	1,470	1,580	2.7	-4.4
<b>Service-Providing Industries</b>	57,600	57,130	55,880	0.8	3.1
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	15,610	15,610	15,060	0.0	3.7
Wholesale Trade	5,100	5,100	4,990	0.0	2.2
Retail Trade	8,500	8,530	8,180	-0.4	3.9
Utilities	120	120	130	0.0	-7.7
Transportation	1,890	1,860	1,760	1.6	7.4
Information	1,120	1,120	940	0.0	19.1
Financial Activities	2,210	2,230	2,210	-0.9	0.0
Professional & Business Services	12,710	12,430	12,160	2.3	4.5
Educational & Health Services	6,990	6,990	6,610	0.0	5.7
Leisure & Hospitality	5,910	5,830	5,630	1.4	5.0
Other Services	1,980	2,100	2,100	-5.7	-5.7
Government Education	4,560	4,150	4,600	9.9	-0.9
Government Administration	6,510	6,670	6,570	-2.4	-0.9

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

of unemployed increased just over 50. Since population in this county has been slightly decreasing, this data suggests that more people have entered the labor force who were not previously included due to a variety of reasons. There would not necessarily be jobs immediately available for all of the people returning to the labor force, and therefore some would be counted as unemployed. The other three counties showed slight decreases. As a whole, all nine counties in Northeast Idaho showed an unemployment rate of 3.2 percent in September.

*Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 340 over the month, with a gain of 470 jobs in *Service-Providing Industries* counteracting the loss of 130 jobs in *Goods-Producing Industries*. A loss of 150 jobs in *Construction* dominated the overall loss with projects starting to slow down for the season and some employees leaving to return to school. In the *Service-Providing Industries*,

*Professional & Business Services* showed a gain of almost 300 jobs from August to September 2004 while *Government Administration* and *Other Services* combined experienced the opposite with a loss of approximately 300 jobs. As expected, *Government Education* showed the largest increase—410—with all schools starting back into regular sessions. Year-over-year, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 2,190 with *Service-Providing Industries* accounting for 1,720 jobs and *Goods-Producing Industries* providing the other 470. *Construction* provided the large increase in *Goods-Producing Industries*, while *Service-Providing Industries* had many contributors. *Professional & Business Services* added 550 jobs along with an increase of 380 jobs in *Educational & Health Services*. Both of these are encouraging increases since they employ many professionals. *Retail Trade* also showed a large increase of 320 jobs while *Leisure & Hospitality* showed an increase of 280 jobs. *Other Services* was the only sector to show any substantial loss at 120 jobs.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

- Sunnyside Road in Idaho Falls has been the site of a great deal of commercial development activity recently. Three new commercial sectors are currently in the construction phase with several businesses already up and running. From west to east on Sunnyside Road, the first sector is located on the southwest corner of St. Clair and Sunnyside Roads. The businesses that are known to be locating there at this time are: Soft Touch Dental Care, Family Resource Center, Idaho Central Credit Union, and NSI Communications. There appears to still be offices and building space available. The next sector is at Merlin Drive and includes: Beehive Federal Credit Union; Willamette Dental; Tall Dentistry; Charles Call Podiatry; Murphy, Wright and Associates; Elison Orthodontics; Eyecare Associates; Poston, Denny and Killpack PLLC; Insight Financial; Aspen Valley Dentistry; and Mountain West Dermatology. Commercial lots are still available in this sector. The third sector is further east and across from Eastern Idaho Medical Center on Washington Parkway. The businesses located there are Biddulph and Huntsman Orthopedics, Medical Center for Children and Adolescents, Stephen Morano Neurology, Aspen Home Health and Hospice, Family First Medical Center, Mountain Crest Foot and Ankle, Elison Dental, Summit Health Professionals, and Harris Dental. There are several other buildings under construction there along with many lots still available. Growth is steady on Sunnyside Road because of the ongoing road expansion to five lanes and addition of an exit there off of Interstate 15. Officials expect this exit to be highly used as it leads to popular destinations such as the hospitals and the Grand Teton Mall. Most of these businesses are relocating from

other areas in town, but some are new developments or combinations of existing businesses and/or medical providers.

- Eastern Idaho Economic Development Council (EIEDC) has been renamed to Grow Idaho Falls Inc. to better define its boundaries since changes were made earlier in the year. The staff and board has remained the same—Kipp Hicks as the President/CEO—but its name and mission statement now reflect the organization's concentration on the greater Idaho Falls area rather than the seven-plus county area it once covered.
- Battelle Energy Alliance (BEA) won the 10-year \$5 billion contract to manage the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL) starting February 2005. At this time the nuclear site, situated mostly in the Arco desert, will become known as the Idaho National Laboratory (INL). Laboratory staff will start work on the Next Generation Nuclear Plant and lead the Center for Advanced Energy Studies. A handful of teams had put in for the bid, but BEA came out the victor with a team of Battelle Memorial Institute, BWXT Services Inc., Washington Group International, the Electric Power Research Institute, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. A second major contract focusing on the cleanup at the INL is still in the bidding process with the winner to be announced in the spring of 2005.
- Rexburg will be home to a World Gym before the end of the year. It will be located on the corner of Seventh South and Pioneer Road and will offer classes in yoga, spinning, Pilates, and martial arts. It will also have racquetball courts and offer APEX fitness and nutrition programs. Solar Connection Tanning Salon will be part of the complex and Kids World will provide tending for children. This is the second of five World Gyms planned for the eastern Idaho region. The Idaho Falls gym has already been in operation for several years.

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